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Forward Together Newsletter - 9/15/2020

University of Northern Iowa

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The Importance of Being Tested

As COVID-19 cases continue to rise across the nation, health experts agree that in addition to taking everyday precautionary measures, one of the most important decisions we can make when we're experiencing COVID-19 symptoms is to get tested.

"This is by far the most important piece of advice I can give our community," said Shelley O'Connell, Executive Director, Student Health and Well-being Services. "Testing is what lets COVID-positive patients know which steps to take. It leads to contact tracing and attempts to protect others. None of that can happen without the test."

When your symptoms feel mild, it can be tempting to brush it off as a small cold or allergies. But remember: this virus is extremely contagious, and for some, very dangerous.

There are multiple common symptoms to look for:

- Shortness of breath
- Cough
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Aching muscles
- Headache

As well as a few less-common signs:

- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Phlegm buildup

While getting tested can give you peace of mind in knowing your status, it also gives contact tracers the ability to notify others, providing those individuals the information they need to care for themselves - as well as their friends and family.

Luckily, members of the UNI community have several testing options - and depending on the severity of your symptoms, you might even have your test results within minutes. The [UNI Student Health Center](#) provides testing options to students, faculty, and staff.

Simply call 319-273-2100 to be assessed. While some might choose to see their personal physician, others may opt to go to a [Testlowa](#) location. No matter where you're tested, be sure to fill out the [Panther Health Survey](#) to report this information. You should also fill out the survey each day you plan to be on campus, if you're experiencing symptoms, or if you've had an exposure to someone who has tested positive.

Important Information

From now through Oct. 7, UNI is offering free flu shots to students and employees. All Flu Clinics will be held at Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center to ensure physical distancing. No appointment necessary - just show up. [View the schedule](#).

On Monday, the university announced [changes to its Spring schedule](#). Spring 2021 classes will begin one week later than originally planned - the new start date is Jan. 25. There will be no Spring Break week, and finals will be held May 3-7. The new calendar will also allow select classes to be offered during 3-week and 6-week winter terms through distance learning.

The Panther Health Survey just got even smarter for those impacted by COVID-19. Early this morning, the survey deployed new questions designed to elevate and enhance the tool, as well as aid in the potential for additional reporting. Be sure to view the [COVID-19 Public Dashboard](#) to stay updated on our campus numbers.